

# Combining and Varying Sentences I

If your writing style never varies, it quickly becomes boring. You can make sure that your writing is always fresh and interesting by varying sentence structure. To add variety to your writing, try varying the beginnings of your sentences.

The most common beginning for a sentence is a subject followed by a verb.

*The team practiced on the field for twenty minutes.*

*The man dropped his hat in the puddle.*

Constant repetition of the subject-verb pattern can become monotonous. Readers will lose interest in even the best ideas if they are always structured in the same way. Adding introductory words, phrases, and clauses to sentence beginnings will keep your writing style varied and engaging.

**Basic:** Carla ran down the hallway with an armful of books.

**Varied:** With an armful of books, Carla ran down the hallway.

**Basic:** The visitors waved to the townspeople as they drove down the road.

**Varied:** As they drove down the road, the visitors waved to the townspeople.

**Basic:** The company had a party to celebrate their accomplishments.

**Varied:** To celebrate their accomplishments, the company had a party.

**Basic:** We took my brother to the doctor because he broke his arm.

**Varied:** Because he broke his arm, we took my brother to the doctor.

**DIRECTIONS** Combine each set of the following sentences in two different ways, varying the beginnings of sentences.

**EXAMPLE** Marcy told her friends. She received the scholarship. She was excited.

a. *Excited, Marcy told her friends she had received the scholarship.*

b. *After she received the scholarship, Marcy excitedly told her friends.*

- Lynn had to practice soccer after school. Lynn had to study every night. She still had time to work at the shelter.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

LESSON 1, *continued*

2. Juan exercises at least three times a week. He also follows a low-fat diet. He wants to make the swim team.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Earthworms are relatively small creatures. They make a large contribution to the environment. They break down decaying matter in the soil.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The ancient Olympic games were a religious festival. They honored Zeus. Zeus is the king of the Greek gods.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park attracts many visitors. It is the highest mountain on the east coast of the United States.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. The firefighters drenched the flames with water. They battled the fire for hours. They worked desperately.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_